

There are really just two simple steps to effective participation in transportation projects:

One, do your research and find out what projects are out there and what they are about...what will they build? What impacts and benefits are expected? Then...

"I'm not much of a public speaker"

Two, you don't have to make speeches in front of large groups of people in order to have your say. Get on a project mailing list so that you're aware of the latest developments. Read project reports. Then, draw a picture, write a letter, take a photo, send an email, cut out magazine articles about things implemented in other places, make a phone call, talk at a meeting, join a workshop.... Through your input, the NHDOT strives to achieve full and fair participation of all affected communities.

Other pieces in the Citizen's Guide to Transportation series include:

- #1. Having Your Say in transportation projects that shape your community
- #2. Planning the Future of New Hampshire Transportation
- #3. Project Development: Making transportation projects a reality
- #5. Transportation Enhancement Program
- #6. Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program
- #7. The Transportation/Land Use Relationship

8.1.01

The momentum behind Access Management is growing, as shown by the successes in the following projects:

- In Bedford, a "US 3 Policy" is in place, a partnership between the Town of Bedford and NHDOT. In order to work towards a goal of US 3 as a "major arterial," the policy sets a roadway configuration standard (two lanes in each direction, with median or turn lane where appropriate) then requires developers of new uses accessing the roadway to contribute to right-of-way acquisition and roadway construction. The town requires setback along Rt.3 to accommodate this policy.



Bedford, NH

- Major highway exits in Concord and Bedford have each been the focus of ground-breaking approaches to development planning and access management studies. The approach identifies an area-of-influence for the given interchange, then calculates the amount of development which would "build-out", or meet the development capacity, of that area. Then based on land uses and square footage assumed in the "build-out", vehicle trips and resulting traffic impacts are estimated. These studies are undertaken as a partnership between local agencies, NHDOT and developers, with participation required in order to develop in the area. Engineering, planning and design costs, and construction costs are proportionally assigned based on relative impacts associated with a given development. Early costs are met by currently active developers, but later developers will make up the costs when they build.



Concord, NH

#4

New Hampshire Department of Transportation
Citizen's Guide to Transportation Series

ACCESS MANAGEMENT

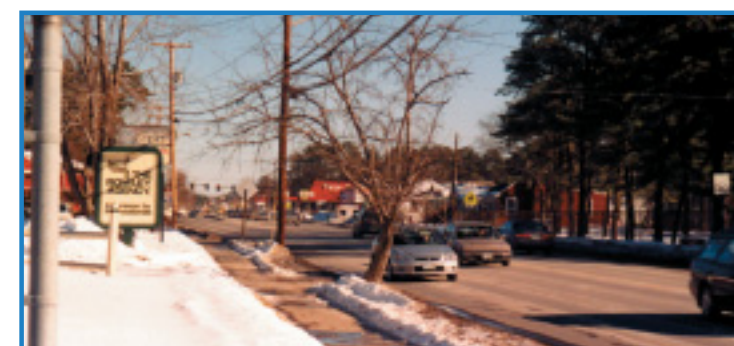


What is Access Management?

Access Management is a community working together with State and local agencies to balance the needs of motorists traveling a roadway with the needs of property owners accessing the roadway.

Each driveway that intersects a roadway provides a point of potential conflict as cars turn off of the roadway, or turn on to the roadway. As a result, traffic slows down, the efficiency of the roadway is reduced, and the potential for accidents increases. If the number of driveways is constrained, the number of times traffic must slow down to accommodate turns is limited, and more cars can get to where they are going on the roadway. But, of course, driveways allow people to access homes and commercial establishments, so they cannot all be eliminated. A careful balance must be struck between allowing access to properties and moving cars.

By controlling access to a roadway through NHDOT driveway permits-through the purchase of access rights, and/or through local zoning regulations and planning guidelines-the capacity of existing roadways may be significantly increased, and future roadway improvements avoided or at least postponed further into the future. But these access and related land use controls require the cooperation of community residents, businesses, local government officials and NHDOT.



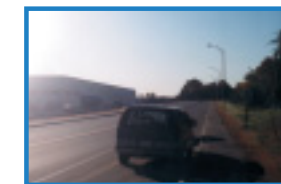
Retail strips typically introduce many driveways to a segment of roadway

The roadway network is organized into different categories, serving different purposes:

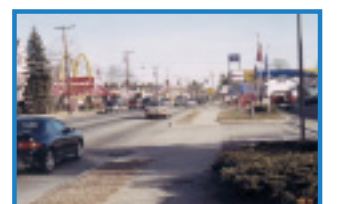
Interstate highways and some state highways may only be accessed at interchanges, usually located miles apart and with enough capacity so that traffic along the highway never stops moving. They are typically the major transportation links for the region, capable of carrying traffic traveling long distances. Direct access between the highway and private properties abutting the highway is not permitted; this is known as "limited access."



Arterial roadways are also for designed longer trips, typically between and around cities, often connecting to interstate highways. Preferably, access along collectors is controlled to some degree to promote safety and traffic flow.



Collector roadways connect local streets to arterial roadways. Their role is to connect people to neighborhoods and business districts, as well as serve homes and businesses abutting the collector roadway. Along these roadways, driveways are more frequent and travel speeds are lower.



Local streets connect people to collectors and arterials. Access is controlled by local agencies and consequently such streets can have the highest share of driveways.

For these streets, access takes precedence over traffic flow and travel speeds are low.



ACCESS MANAGEMENT



Because the roles of arterials and collectors feature a careful equilibrium between providing driveways and moving traffic, they require the most attention in access management. The sites along these types of roads are visible to a greater volume of traffic passing by, making them attractive to businesses and subject to development, ultimately resulting in more driveways and more traffic. For motorists and businesses it is essential to maintain good traffic flow, while still providing the needed access. Too many driveways along a roadway create congestion and safety concerns that discourage customers.

The balance between access and traffic flow is not necessarily solved by building new or wider roads to carry more traffic. Road construction introduces its own problems: the cost of roadway construction, the inconveniences of construction to abutters and motorists, the purchase of land on which to build the road, reduced open space and impacts to natural or cultural resources, and displacement of businesses and residents.

How can we accommodate all of the traffic without building new roads?

Access management techniques have been shown to reduce crashes upwards of 50% and improve traffic flow by 35 to 40%. The techniques involve planning and communication between communities and agencies, and community determination to ensure that the implementation of these techniques will be beneficial to all (community, region, motorists, and property owners) over the long term. The techniques vary from relatively modest and benign measures for individual properties, to comprehensive and substantial requirements covering a number of property owners in a zoning district. The techniques include the following:

- Minimizing the number of driveways while still providing necessary access.
- Locating driveways outside of intersection approaches, and not in close proximity to adjacent driveways.
- Requiring homes or businesses to share driveways. This concept may even extend to requiring construction of a service road to be shared among several property owners, and in doing so, local traffic is kept off the arterial or collector roadway serving through traffic. This principle is particularly important in areas where parcels are small, or have small frontages to the arterial or collector roadway in question. In such areas, if each parcel had a driveway there would be many driveways, closely spaced.



- Requiring developers to consider their plans within the context of the community and regional roadway system. Developers should provide connections to adjacent developments and other local roads, not just the collector or arterial roadway. The types of connections are dependent on type of roadways to be accessed and must complement and accommodate the areas to be connected.

- Requiring signage sizes and locations which do not interfere with the visibility from or to access points.



- Requiring driveways to be designed to provide enough room for cars turning off the roadway so they do not block other cars doing the same.
- Requiring raised medians where appropriate to prevent left turns into or out of driveways. Right-turn-in-only or right-turn-out-only driveways are the safest and most efficient means (creating the least traffic delay) of moving traffic onto or off of a roadway.
- Requiring additional lanes or wide shoulders to separate through traffic from turning traffic.
- Requiring that approval for significant roadway construction projects be conditioned on access being controlled, or in the cases of brand new arterials in a new location, conditioned on little to no access allowed.

Finally, community master plans must focus on **nodal development**, that is, **development in concentrated centers with small blocks, short connections between uses and multiple paths to get there.**

VERSUS

Linear development, in which many facilities are stretched along a single roadway.

Incentives for development must focus on nodal patterns, or the preservation of open space between nodes, thereby limiting the number of access points along a roadway. Planning ahead with Access Management techniques will help your community grow in ways which promote safety and community character, and limit congestion.